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mtg*DRAFT OF PARAS. 1-3DISCUSSION PAPER

on

PROBLEMS ILLUSTRATED BY RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN
THE NEAR EAST AND THE TAIWAN STRAITSIntroduction

1. As a result of studies conducted by the agencies concerned, the Planning Board believes the following problems, revealed by the operations in Lebanon and in the Taiwan Straits last summer and fall, should be called to the Council's attention. There is no doubt that in the Taiwan Strait operation the firmness of purpose, positive action, and a determined stand on the part of the United States successfully thwarted Communist efforts toward expansion of the Sino-Soviet periphery and sphere of influence, and constituted a major deterrent on the actions of the potential aggressor. In the Lebanon operation, the United States was successful in promoting stability in the area. We should not expect, however, that similar future operations could always be carried out under circumstances as favorable as those present during operations in Lebanon and Jordan and in the Taiwan Straits. Thus it should be noted that conclusions to be drawn from the Lebanon and the Quemoy and

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Matsu operations are not universally applicable in situations where limited military operations may be necessary.

Problems

2. U. S. prestige has become closely identified with the maintenance of the Chinese Nationalist position on the Off-shore Islands. There was, however, a general lack of support on the part of some Allies for this position and differing appraisals as to the strategic importance of these islands.*

3. The obscurity surrounding the supply and casualty picture in Quemoy in September 1958 demonstrates the danger of relying on an ally for information which may vitally affect U. S. decision-making. The United States should develop in such situations an independent capability for objective verification of tactical and logistical facts and plans.

* The NSC Planning Board has scheduled a review of U. S. Policy Toward the Far East (NSC 5429/5) for May 1959.

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